



Rude (I'm gonna marry him anyway) by TragicBlackButterfly

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Summary: Richie Tozier/Eddie Kaspbrak/Reddie songfic based on Rude by Magic! "She swore Richie made her son gay. In all reality, it was probably a two-way street. Eddie was the first and only boy Richie had ever fallen for, and he wasn't even sure how it happened... Nah, Richie was pretty sure that Eddie made him gay first. He just got lucky that Eddie was gay right back."

Rude (I'm gonna marry him anyway)

*Knocked on your door with heart in my hand to ask you a question,
'cause I know that you're an old-fashioned woman*

Richie Tozier had never been so fucking nervous in his whole life as he was in that moment. He stared at the familiar door (not as familiar as the window, but hey), bouncing on his toes as he plucked up the courage to knock. He'd knocked on that door a million times, but usually Eddie's car (or bike, when they were kids) was in the driveway when he did. This time, he planned to knock with the full knowledge that Eddie wasn't in there. Eddie wouldn't answer the door.

His mom would.

Richie wiped sweaty palms on his good jeans and wished he had a smoke. He'd left them all in his truck 'cause he knew how much Sonia Kaspbrak hated cigarettes and didn't want to smell like smoke when he talked her up. Fuck, though, his nerves were shot.

For all his jokes, Eddie's mom fucking terrified him, more so since he started dating Eddie a few years back. She'd never liked him before that, hated the way he never stood still or never stopped yapping and never quit getting Eddie into danger or trouble. He'd calmed down a bit when they hit middle school, but then Mrs. Kaspbrak had a new reason to hate Richie.

She swore he made her son gay. In all reality, it was probably a two-way street. Eddie was the first and only boy Richie had ever fallen for, and he wasn't even sure how the fuck it happened. Falling in love with Eddie Kaspbrak had literally just been that: falling, simple and effortless and nothing he had any control over. Touches became longer, sweeter-glances extended until one of the other Losers had to snap them out of it-and Richie found his heart suddenly in his throat whenever Eddie laughed at one of his jokes.

Nah, Richie was pretty sure that Eddie made him gay first. He just got lucky that Eddie was gay right back.

Richie remembered the last time he'd been so nervous to knock on Eddie's door. Freshman year of high school, Richie asked Eddie to Homecoming as a joke (or so he said, because it was anything but a joke to Richie and he hoped to God that Eddie felt the same way). Eddie said yes, informed him immediately that their ties would be pink, and told him to pick him up at eight. Richie had never been so fucking happy. Even if Eddie hadn't felt the same, at least he was gonna have fun with his best friend.

The night went about as smoothly as any of Richie Tozier's plans. His truck broke down halfway there, and Eddie handed him tools as he quickly tried to prepare the damage. If Eddie'd been upset, he didn't show it, just kept saying, "Only you, Trashmouth. This could only happen to you."

Then when they got to the school, Richie realized he'd forgotten to buy the motherfucking tickets. Luckily, Eddie knew him well and had purchased a pair, which he presented with a shit-eating grin, and Richie just couldn't resist pinching his cheeks for that.

Cute, cute, cute!

They danced with the other Losers, and he and Bev only snuck out once to smoke. He'd even stole Mike from his date for a slow dance until Eddie stole him right back. He pulled them away from the losers, away from Stan and Bill wrapped up in each other and away from Bev and Ben shamelessly flirting, and to a remote corner of the gymnasium, which was shrouded in shadow and so intimate that Richie could hardly breathe.

He'd tried to crack a joke, do a Voice. Anything to relieve the fucking tension. Eddie simply rolled his eyes and pulled him close. *Africa* by Toto was playing when Richie couldn't take it anymore. He couldn't take Eddie's dark eyes or the quirk of his smile or the way his fingers curled absently around Richie's untamed hair-he'd kissed him to *Africa*, and Eddie had kissed him right back. That had been like falling in love, too. Just natural, as if it was always supposed to happen, and it had taken him too damn long to figure it out.

But that was four years ago, and now they were eighteen and ready to leave for college. Richie wanted to go to LA-"That's where all the

stars live, Eds! And I'm gonna be a star, and you'll be my trophy wife!"-and Eddie had decided to go with him-"Figures you would drag us to one of the most disease-ridden cities in the US."-without even a second thought.

Richie was having second thoughts, though. Not about Eds going with him. No, LA wouldn't be worth it without his Eds. He was having second thoughts about Eds going with him as his *boyfriend*.

Richie touched the small box in his pocket. It was heavy, and it grounded him, gave him reason not to just say fuck it and run away like the coward he fucking was. He really wished he could run away, but he wanted to do this. He knew what the outcome was gonna be, but he still wanted to.

He was gonna do this *right*.

With a deep breath, Richie raised a fist and knocked three times. He smoothed his favorite leather jacket nervously. He'd pulled all the stops today, picking the jeans with the least amount of holes, the only plain white t-shirt he had that wasn't ragged around the seams, and the pink leather jacket Eds had gotten him for their second anniversary (because Richie needed some color in his life, he'd said, and he looked amazing in pink). He even tried to tame his hair (which he hoped went as well as he thought it did, but it probably still looked messy as fuck).

Richie Tozier looked fucking *good*.

But when Sonia Kaspbrak opened up her door and turned her nose up at him, he felt like a piece of shit. Literal shit. Right there. On her doorstep. Probably smoking in the early heat of summer.

Richie responded the only way he knew how: by running his trashmouth until it got him into trouble. "Hey there, Mrs. K! What's hanging?" he sputtered nervously, leaning forward to clap her on the shoulder but aborting the movement before he could embarrass himself even more.

"Mr. Tozier. Eddie isn't here," she replied, her lips tight in a thin line. Richie thought he could see her jaw twitching. Eddie's did that every

now and then, when he was really pissed or stressed or looking at something unpleasant.

"Uh, yeah. That's okay. That's cool. Uh, actually, I came here to talk to you, Mrs. K. A little one-on-one, y' know." Richie shoved his hands in his pockets and then pulled them back out. He rubbed his palms on his pants. If he thought he could get away with it and not look like a fucking idiot, he would've been jogging in place.

With the narrow glare she fixed him with, he didn't think it was a good idea. "What could you possibly want to talk to me about, Mr. Tozier?" She said his name with the same detestation one might have for an infectious disease, and that's what he was to her. Some *disease* that had infected her son. His Eds.

Richie still pressed onward because he'd made it this far, and he'd be fucked if he backed out now, despite every instinct screaming at him to book it.

"Well, uh, you see... Mrs. K, as I'm sure you remember, Eds-er, Eddie and I have been dating for quite some time now."

"How could I forget?" she muttered disdainfully, a dangerous glint to her eyes that made Richie nervous. He began to sweat. The plan was falling apart-the plan he and Stan had spent hours coming up with. Speak clearly, nice and concise, and don't ramble. He wasn't supposed to fucking ramble.

And what was he about to do? *Fucking ramble.*

"Well, Eds and I have been together for, like, four fu-uh-uh-un. Yeah. Fun years. Four fun fucking years. Shit. I mean, uh. What I'm tryin' to say, Mrs. K, is that he and I have gotten, er, pretty serious at this point, ya know. Seems like we're both on the same page and all that. So, uh. So I was just wondering if-"

Spit it out, Trashmouth!

"Look. I love your son. He makes me so damn happy, and I like to think I make him happy, too. I wanna make him happy for the rest of our lives. Uh... would you, uh...."

Her eyes narrowed even further, as if daring him to speak his next words. Richie swallowed and took the plunge.

"Mrs. Sonia Kaspbrak, I wanna marry your son. I've come to ask for your blessing."

Can I have your boy for the rest of my life? Say yes, say yes, 'cause I need to know. You say I'll never get your blessing 'til the day I die. Tough luck, my friend, the answer is NO.

"Absolutely not! I won't hear a word of it! My Eddie marry-marry-marry you?" Mrs. Kaspbrak spit out her words like venom, aiming for his veins, and Richie cringed at her ferocity. He knew she objected to their relationship. He'd just conveniently forgotten *how much*. "Out of the question!"

"Well, I think-

"I don't care what you think, you horrid boy! You've infected my Eddie with your-your-your *disease*, and now you want to ruin his future completely! Eddie will marry a nice girl from a nice family, not the son of a the local drunk!" she shrieked, reminding Richie of Eddie back when they were kids. Simpler times, simpler days, when all he had to worry about was Henry Bowers and his gang picking on them for whatever stupid shit they'd been accused of.

This accusation was so much worse, though. She was actually calling their love a *disease*. And just like that, Richie's filter dropped.

"No offense, Mrs. K," he muttered, his hands curled into fists. Nails pressed into the inside of his palm, indenting uneven crescent moons because he'd been biting his nails on the way over. "But your son is pretty fucking gay, so I don't see him marrying some chick anytime soon."

"It's just a phase. *You're* just a phase. At the end of summer, my Eddie will be off to a good college, far away from the likes of you! Then, he'll begin to see. He'll be cured," she insisted, still clinging to the delusion that Richie had ruined her precious son.

"He doesn't need to be fucking *cured*! There's nothing wrong with

him! We love each other. *He loves me.* What part of that don't you fucking get?" Richie ground, trying to keep from yelling. Yelling would attract people, and people would attract law enforcement. He didn't doubt that Sonia Kaspbrak would throw him under the bus if it came down to it.

"Don't you take that tone with me, you foul-mouthed little heathen! You'll never see my Eddie again, if I have anything to say about it!"

Richie's blood boiled. He clenched and unclenched his fists. So many thoughts ran through his head, but all he could seem to focus on was how she talked to him. Like he was vermin. Like he was worthless. The same way people had been looking at him his whole fucking life.

Except Eddie and the other Losers. They didn't treat him like he was an inconvenience or a bother. Sure, they rolled their eyes at his jokes and humored him with his Voices, but they still liked to be around him. They still invited him to movie nights and the Barrens, and Eddie still held his hand and cuddled him and kissed him like he meant something to him.

And here this bitch was trying to break them apart. Tell Richie that he couldn't be with the one person who made him feel like something.

Well. He had only one fucking thing to say to her.

Why you gotta be so rude? Don't you know I'm human too? Why you gotta be so rude?

"I'm gonna marry him anyway," Richie Tozier swore, and he savored the shock in her eyes before he turned toward his truck again. She had another thing coming if she thought she could keep Richie from Eddie. That was *his* Eds, *his* Eddie Spaghetti, and he'd give up every Voice he ever made for a chance to marry him.

His hand had barely closed around the door handle when her scathing voice caught up with him. "What makes you think my son would even want to marry *you*?"

Richie slammed the door behind him and drove off, his heart racing,

his head pounding, and his vision blurring before he even realized he was crying. He pulled over his truck, his hands shaking, and pounded his fists on the steering wheel.

"Shit!" He shoved his hair back out of his face and gripped his hair, puling tightly with sweaty hands as he took deep breaths. He tried to push away the doubts, but they showed their rotten heads anyways, with ripping teeth and tearing claws and a ruthless smile that promised he would feel no mercy.

Doubts that maybe she was right. Maybe this thing with Eddie wasn't as stable as Richie had hoped. Maybe Eddie would ditch him for a good gal much better than Richie could ever hope to be, help her pop out a couple of kids, and lead a happy, normal life without him. Eddie would do fine without him. Richie was the one who couldn't live without him.

The box in his pocket felt so heavy now, so fucking heavy. Earlier, it had grounded him, and now he worried that box might crush him into the ground. He'd been so sure about them? How could one woman fucking turn his world upside-down like this? He never had any doubts when he was with Eddie. Not when Eddie held his hand or curled against his side at night. Certainly not when Eddie kissed him.

Richie closed his eyes and tried to wrap himself around that feeling. Eddie's mouth against his, melting against him as a hand twisted around his curls, just like the first time they'd kissed. Their kisses were slow, open-mouthed, almost lazy. They had all the time in the world.

So why did it suddenly feel like they didn't?

Cursing under his breath, Richie turned his truck back onto the road, driving far away from the Kaspbrak residence and the thoughts plaguing him. He knew he couldn't outrun his problems, but he could fucking try, couldn't he?

Richie went to the only safe place he could think of: the Barrens. He and the Losers had spent so many days and even some nights down there, listening to the water run and the birds sing. Stan loved to bird

watch there. He always said it was like their own little pocket of the world, where the filth of Derry fell away into peace and serenity.

Of course, when Stan said that, Richie had teased him relentlessly. Said Ben was the poet of the group. Stan merely rolled his eyes, but the tell-tale quirk of his mouth hinted that he'd understood what Richie meant all along. *He felt it, too.*

Richie parked his truck and walked for a long time, weaving through tree branches until he found a tree he thought he could climb. Even if he hadn't thought he could climb it, he probably still would've tried. He jumped up, thankful for his long arms and long legs that might have looked gangly and awkward enough but were perfect for tree-climbing.

He caught the first branch and pulled himself up, imaging what Eddie would be saying if he was there, too. Probably ranting, telling Richie he could kill himself. Eddie probably knew the fucking statistics for tree-related deaths, but even that was cute as shit.

The box was heavy, almost weighing him back down to the earth. Richie was surprised the branch didn't crack under the burden of it.

Richie sat against the trunk and pulled out a pack of smokes. He put one in his mouth until it was spent and then replaced it with another. The sun had started to set. His phone vibrated with a few texts, but he didn't bother glancing at it. Probably Stan, wondering how it'd went. Or Mike, to see if Richie was still happy with the work they'd been doing all week. Whoever it was, he didn't want to talk.

His phone rang this time, and Richie felt his heart clench almost unbearably. *Africa* by Toto. Eddie was calling him. He clenched his fist, listening to the familiar chorus and wondering if he should man up and just answer it. By now, he'd probably heard about what had happened with his mom, and he probably wanted to yell at Richie.

You asked my mom if you could marry me, and she said no? Obviously, I'm going to listen to her! Which sounded nothing like Eddie, but it was the best that Richie could come up with on short notice.

The ringing stopped, leaving Richie in quiet emptiness again. The silence was earsplitting, echoing with the pounding of his heart, so

loud and so violent that he worried he might explode from the strain. He shut his eyes and willed his body to relax.

"Screening my calls now, Tozier? Not cool."

Richie sucked in a breath and peeked an eye open. Standing at the base of the tree was Eddie, his phone out and a frown on his face. Oh, yeah, he'd definitely heard about what had happened, and he was fucking pissed. Richie didn't want to have this conversation.

"Don't worry, Toots." Richie's accented voice sounded too loud in the peaceful atmosphere. "It's not just you. I would'a done the same for anybody. Jus' ask your mom." The mom joke stung, the memory of her fierce glare and harsh words still too fresh in his mind.

Eddie rolled his eyes. "Beep beep, Rich. We were all supposed to meet up at the Aladdin today. You could've at least told us you weren't coming."

"Awww," Richie cooed, batting his eyelashes and falling easily into a new persona, "was my dearest, darling Eds worried about little ol' me? What a gentleman!"

"Your southern belle could use some work," Eddie teased, but he cracked a quick smile. "And I wasn't worried at first. It wouldn't be the first time that you've blown us off to go get high or some shit. Then I heard Stan and Mike whispering about you, and they wouldn't tell me what the fuck it was all about, so I-"

"I'm sorry, Eddie," Richie interrupted before the budding panic attack could take hold. Perplexed worry flashed across Eddie's face for a moment, but he didn't say anything. "I shouldn't have made you worry like that. You wanna come up here with me? You wouldn't believe the view." Who the fuck was he trying to kid? The only view he cared about stood at the base of the tree, huffing and stamping his foot.

"I'd rather *you* come down *here*. Do you know how many people die in tree-related incidents every year? You could've broken your neck or your back or your leg-quite frankly, I'm amazed that you even made it up there without hurting yourself."

Richie grinned. God, he loved him. "How about I sit up here and you sit down there, and we'll talk like that. It'll be like when we were kids and used walkie-talkies and shit."

"We never used walkie-talkies. *You* used walkie-talkies to have fake conversations with us." Nevertheless, Eddie sat down against the trunk, not exactly under Richie (he was probably thinking the branch would break and smash him. It was a realistic fear. There was a pretty heavy box in Richie's pocket) but as close to Richie as he could be. Richie wanted to touch him. Put an arm around his shoulder, snuggle him close, tell him about how Mrs. K was mean to him.

Richie settled for silence. Loud, deafening silence, where the only noise he could even begin to focus on was the even sound of Eddie breathing. It was comforting, having Eddie there, but it didn't stop the doubts from flying out of his mouth before he could stop them.

"Hey... do you wanna break up?"

Eddie was quiet for a beat. "Get down here."

"No, I like it up here. Answer the question."

"I'm not gonna answer the fucking question until you get your ass out of the tree."

"Sorry, bud, I'm-

"Talk to me properly, Richie!" Eddie had sat up and turned his head, craning his neck to see his face, but Richie looked the other way. "What the fuck is all this about? You were fine this morning, then I have to listen to Mike and Stan mutter about you like they know some grand secret that I don't, and now you ask me something like this? What the fuck, Tozier?" Ouch, the last name twice in one night? Richie was definitely in the dog house tonight.

"Eddie, calm down," Richie tried to reason, concern edging its way through his veins. Eddie was getting way too upset, and they all knew what happened when Eddie was upset. Anxiety in the form of an asthma attack would cripple him; Richie's stupid fears weren't worth that.

"Don't fucking tell me to calm down! I want to know what the fuck is going on!" Eddie wheezed, anxiety taking hold of him, and Richie was out of the tree within seconds. He knelt down in front of his boyfriend, already reaching into his back pocket for Eddie's spare inhaler. He tried to put it in Eddie's mouth, but Eddie swatted at his hand.

"Eds, come on! You're hyperventilating!"

"N-no! Do you-do you-*do you wanna break up with me?*" He sounded so distraught, so devastated, that Richie couldn't take it anymore.

He surged forward to press his mouth to Eddie's, stifling the sobs in his throat. Eddie smacked him and shoved him away, glaring, panting, and then pulled him back for another hard kiss. Richie touched his face and wiped away the tears he found there, feeling more rotten than he ever had in his whole life.

"Y-you're an asshole," Eddie mumbled, tucking his face against Richie's throat. Richie sat beside him, huddling him in his arms and, finally, getting him to take a puff off the inhaler.

"I know I am, Eds. I know," he murmured, holding him tight.

"Why do you want to break up?"

"I don't, Eds. I swear I don't." Richie pressed a lingering kiss to the top of Eddie's head, willing him to calm down. It wasn't working.

"Then why would you-"

"I dunno, okay? I just wanna make sure you're positive about me, you know? If you changed your mind and didn't wanna be with me anymore, you wouldn't need to hide it. You could just tell me. I could take it."

Eddie sniffled; his hand slipped under the leather jacket to grip the fabric over Richie's heart. He wondered if Eds could feel it beating like crazy. "Why the fuck would I want to break up with you? You're a fucking idiot."

"I just-"

"We're going to the *same college*. If we broke up, I'd have to see your stupid face all the time."

Richie shrugged. "I could go to a different college. You wouldn't have to worry."

"LA was *your* idea! And anyway, how the fuck would you even get there?"

"Well, I-what?"

"We planned to *drive* to LA. And by we, I mean me behind the wheel and you changing the radio station every five seconds. Without my natural sense of direction, you'll get lost."

"I wouldn't get lost!"

"Richie, you got lost using a GPS!"

"Yeah, but-"

"On the way to *my house*!"

"I know, but-"

"I live two blocks away from you! You know how to get there! What the fuck did you even need to use the GPS for?"

"I wanted to try it out! It was a new phone!"

"It was a *bad* phone!"

And just like that, Richie was laughing. Laughing like he didn't realize he could still laugh. All of his doubts fell away now that he had Eddie there in his arms, calling him an idiot and holding onto him for dear life.

Eddie stared at him for a moment, stumped, before he joined in. The two of them laughed, disturbing that grueling silence at last. Then Eddie leaned up to kiss him; Richie nearly turned to jelly right then and there. Eddie's mouth was sweet and insistent, the ghost of laughter still humming there, and all at once, Richie realized that

everything would be all right. No matter what Mrs. K said, he and Eddie were gonna make it. He knew they were.

You know he's in love with me. He will go anywhere I go.

"So," Eddie murmured, his kisses growing long and wet and completely delicious. Richie chased after his mouth every time he pulled away to speak, and he indulged his giant idiot boyfriend once. "Why did you think I wanted to break up?"

"Was being stupid," Richie replied, trying to kiss him again. Eddie evaded him, unsatisfied. "Thought maybe you might decide you like girls or some shit."

Eddie stiffened. Richie wondered what he'd said wrong, and he opened his mouth to babble through an explanation when Eddie turned in his lap to straddle him. He grabbed Richie's face and forced him to look him in the eyes. He searched Richie's expression for any sign of a hint, and his eyes narrowed once he realized.

Oh, *shit*.

"You talked to my *mom*, didn't you?"

"What?" Richie laughed it off. Or, tried to. Eddie wasn't buying it. Fuck. "What makes you think I talked to your mom?"

Eddie rolled his eyes. "Because she's been trying to set me up with a girl for the past *month* now. Seems to think that if I go out with one, I'll realize what I'm missing out on. It's bullshit, like everything else she's ever done in my life. Why were you talking to my mom? You knew I was hanging out with Bill today and wouldn't be home."

"Maybe I just wanted a little nookie from your mom, huh?" Richie raised his hand for a high five, but Eddie merely glared.

"Richie. Why did you go see my mom?" he demanded, his voice rising again.

"I wanted to ask her a question, okay?"

"What question could you *possibly* want to ask her?"

Can I have your boy for the rest of my life? Say yes, say yes, 'cause I need to know.

"I wanted... I wanted to ask her if she'd...." Richie bit his lip, suddenly speechless. Ha. That sure as hell didn't happen often. Why did it have to be at the most important moment of his life, too?

He reached into his pocket and produced the tiny, velvety box that he'd stolen from his mom's jewelry collection (she wasn't using it). Eddie's confused expression suddenly shifted to shock. He stared at the box with wide eyes, amazed by its existence, and Richie took a moment to breathe. Collect himself, now that he didn't have Eddie's eyes on him.

Then Eddie looked back up at him, and Richie swore he saw his eyes glistening. "So you... you went to her to...."

"To ask for her blessing, yeah." Richie sighed and shrugged a little.

"But she hates you." Eddie's voice was quiet, breathless. "What did she say?"

You say I'll never get your blessing 'til the day I die. Tough luck, my friend, but no still means NO.

Richie offered him a sad smile. "What do you think she said?"

"I'm not surprised." Eddie scoffed and rolled his eyes. "Why did you even ask for her blessing?"

"Thought it might be important to you." Richie shrugged again. Eddie took his hand.

"*You're* important to me, dipshit. I don't care what she has to say. Despite how much of a dumbass you can be and all your stupid jokes, I love you." He squeezed Richie's hand, waiting until realization dawned into acceptance on his boyfriend's face. Then he nudged him. "So, uh... if you wanna go ahead and ask... Or you don't, if you don't want to anymore-"

Richie kissed the words out of his mouth, grinning like an idiot. "Marry me, Eds."

Eddie scrunched up his nose. "Isn't it supposed to be a question?"

Richie groaned. "Eddie Spaghetti Kaspbrak-"

"That's not my middle name! Don't propose to me like that!"

"What? You won't tell me your middle name!"

"Because you'll just tease me for it, I know you will!"

"Spaghetti's just a placeholder, then. I'll learn your whole name at the altar. You wanna have a big wedding?"

"I haven't even *agreed* to marry you yet! You can't start planning the wedding before I say yes!"

Then Richie pulled away to open the ring box, which wasn't quiet so heavy anymore, and Eddie fell silent. Richie had known him for years, but he couldn't read the expression on Eddie's face, and that kinda scared him. So he did what he did best: he opened his mouth.

"Sorry it's kinda simple. It's all I could afford. And I couldn't really *afford* it? I ended up swiping a bunch of silver jewelry from my mom, and the rest of the Losers helped chip in whatever they could. Then Mike helped me melt it all down into a new ring for you-he's really good at that; his dad taught him."

But Eddie was hardly listening. He furrowed his brow and squinted at the ring. "Does that say...?"

The answer was *yes*. Yes, Richie had engraved *Eds* with a lopsided heart next to it on the inside of the band. He blushed and tried to stutter through an explanation, but Eddie silenced him with one meaningful stare. Eddie had never looked at him like that with so much affection, so much... so much *want*.

And it wasn't a physical kinda want, either. It was pure, innocent, unabashed love, and it stole Richie's breath away.

"I hate it when you call me that." Eddie's voice was thick and broke at the end.

Richie smiled and placed his hand on Eddie's cheek. He could feel him trembling. "No, you don't."

Eddie shuddered more and bit his lip. Tears began to pool in his eyes, and he gripped Richie's leather jacket for support. "No, I don't."

"Aw, Eds." Richie leaned forward to kiss the tip of his nose. "Eds, please. Say you'll make an honest man out of me. Say you'll marry me."

And Eddie was crying, whispering between wet kisses, "Yes. Yes! *God*, yes, I'll marry you!"

Richie had never heard sweeter words in his whole life. He slipped the ring onto Eddie's finger, and it was a perfect match. The two fell together, all laughter and kisses and disbelief that they'd made it this far. They would make it farther, too. As far as two people in love could ever go.

Richie would make sure of it.

I'm gonna marry him anyway. Marry that boy. Marry him anyway. Marry that boy. Yeah, no matter what you say. Marry that boy. We'll be a family.